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EXAMINER

REAGAN, JAMES A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2163

DATE MAILED: 02/21/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/540,391

Applicant(s)

ROBINS, MARK

Examiner

James A. Reagan

Art Unit

2163

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 December 2001.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 15-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                      4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                      5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_                      6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### **Status of Claims**

1. The claims currently pending before this Office Action are numbers 15-28.
2. Claims 1-14 as cited in the previous Office Action have been canceled.
3. Claims 15-28 have been reviewed in this Office Action.

### **Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112**

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. With regard to the task types which include engineering tasks, quality assurance task, and technical publication generation tasks, the limitations does not explicitly recite which of the tasks it refers to, and cannot simultaneously refer to all three.

### **Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102**

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

7. The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).
8. Summary of "Microsoft Project."

Microsoft Project is a project management tool that helps plan, manage, and communicate information about projects. Tasks and product features, sometimes called "milestones," are listed in the "Product Task" column and associated with a product or project. Detailed steps for each task may be enumerated under each feature. A schedule is created to determine the period of time necessary to complete a task or feature. Schedules may be displayed in numerous Graphical User interfaces (GUI's). Details of a specific task may be entered into the project and saved on a relational database, such as Microsoft Access. Microsoft Project can link tasks, products, and projects together. Reports and other technical documents may be generated.

9. Claims 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by "User's Guide for Microsoft Project" (1995), herein referred to as "Microsoft Project."

**Claims 15, 19:**

Microsoft Project is a project management tool that helps plan, manage, and communicate information about projects (Chapter 1, Managing Your Project with Microsoft Project", page 3, first paragraph).

Product features and tasks enumerated on the Gantt chart (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", pages 90-91). Features may be entered in to the "Task Name" column. For example, line 15 of the diagram shows a lighting system as the product, and the tasks required to complete the product at lines 16-18. In addition, the time required to complete the tasks are shown on the Gantt chart on the left side of the GUI.

Descriptions of the tasks or features instantiated into the task list (Chapter 7, "How You Can Customize a View or Report" page 88).

Graphical user interface (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91).

Tasks and task types, grouped according to specific features (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91). Tasks (or features) are grouped into product development phases.

Task development progress (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91). Options between views (GUI's) are shown as Gantt chart (page 91), calendar (page 93), PERT Chart (page 95).

Task tracking and status (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91).

**Claims 16, 20:**

Linking various Gantt charts from the project (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91). Selection (displaying) of the view is disclosed on page 117, "Displaying a View."

**Claim 18:**

Tasks including design tasks, installation tasks, construction tasks (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91). Inherently, large-scale projects require engineering tasks, QA tasks, and generating publications, as disclosed in Chapter 1, "Managing Your Project with Microsoft Project", (pages 3-6).

**Claim 26:**

Product features and tasks enumerated on the Gantt chart (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", pages 90-91). Features may be entered in to the "Task Name" column.

Descriptions of the tasks or features instantiated into the task list (Chapter 7, "How You Can Customize a View or Report" page 88).

Linking various Gantt charts from the project (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91). Inherently, each task is associated with a product feature or resource, as shown on page 91.

Graphical user interface (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91).

Entering data associated with project tasks (Chapter 2, "Creating and Organizing a schedule", page 7.)

**Claim 27:**

Linking various Gantt charts from the project (Chapter 7, "Printing a Custom Bar Chart Schedule (Gantt Chart)", page 91). Selection (displaying) of the view is disclosed on page 117, "Displaying a View." Inherently, when a feature is chosen to be displayed, the data displayed is linked with the data from that task, and a GUI may be selected as disclosed on page 117.

10. Claims 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Mora et al. United States Patent Number 6,161,113, herein referred to as "Mora."

**Claim 23:**

Mora discloses a computer aided project notebook (column 1, line 48).

Descriptions of major system components (column 18, lines 13-18).

A task list interface (Figures 3 and 4).

Quality assurance plans and reviews (column 11, lines 46-48).

System testing procedures (column 20, lines 19-30).

Management and technical documents (column 2, lines 15-20).

Project documents are interactive and updated as the project progresses (column 2, lines 11-13). Inherently, as shown in Figures 3 and 4, documents are presented with a graphical user interface.

**Claim 24:**

Databases and projects features and tasks are interlinked throughout the databases (column 8, lines 40-45).

**Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103**

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 17, 21, 22, and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Microsoft Project in view of Kroenke, "Database Processing: Fundamentals, Design, and Implementation" (1988), herein referred to as "Kroenke."

**Claims 17, 21:**

Microsoft Project discloses saving files in a database format (Chapter 11, Importing and Exporting Files", page 141). Microsoft Project may be used with



Microsoft Access, a relational database application (Chapter 11, Importing and Exporting Files", page 144). Microsoft Project does not specifically disclose linking the features in a relational database with the use of database keys. Kroenke, however, on pages 116 and 123 does disclose the use of keys and primary keys. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the project management tool of Microsoft Project with the relational database tool of utilizing primary keys as disclosed by Kroenke because primary keys uniquely identify features and tasks associated with a database which allow a user to quickly and efficiently search through large amounts of data to such as product definitions, milestones and schedules.

**Claim 22:**

Microsoft Project discloses a project management tool that helps plan, manage, and communicate information about projects as shown in the rejection of Claim 15 above. Microsoft Project also discloses database properties, but does not specifically disclose that the relational database utilizes a primary key function to individually identify feature descriptions and instances. Kroenke, however, on pages 116 and 123 does disclose the use of keys and primary keys. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the project management tool of Microsoft Project with the relational database tool of utilizing primary keys as disclosed by Kroenke because primary keys uniquely identify features and tasks associated with a

database which allow a user to quickly and efficiently search through large amounts of data to such as product definitions, milestones and schedules.

**Claim 28:**

Microsoft Project discloses a project management tool that helps plan, manage, and communicate information about projects as shown in the rejection of Claim 26 above. Microsoft Project also discloses database properties, but does not specifically disclose that the relational database utilizes a primary key function to individually link feature descriptions, tasks and instances. Kroenke, however, on pages 116 and 123 does disclose the use of keys and primary keys. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the project management tool of Microsoft Project with the relational database tool of utilizing linking keys and primary keys as disclosed by Kroenke because keys uniquely identify features and tasks associated with a database which allow a user to quickly and efficiently search through large amounts of data to such as product definitions, milestones and schedules.

13. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mora in view of Kroenke.

**Claim 25:**

Mora discloses a computer aided project notebook as shown in the rejection of Claim 23 above. Mora also discloses the use of a database, but does not specifically disclose a relational database. Kroenke, however, on pages

17 and 18 does disclose relational database model. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine Mora's use of a database with Kroenke's relational database model because relational databases minimize duplicate data and processing errors as well as provide a powerful filtering tool capable of retrieving data quickly and accurately.

### **Conclusion**


- 14.** Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).
- 15.** A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James A. Reagan whose telephone number is 703.306.9131. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00a - 5:00p M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 703.305.9643. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703.746.7239 for regular communications and 703.746.7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.305.3900.

JAR  
February 12, 2002

  
Kyle J. Choi  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 2163